

The door of opportunity to cure diseases, that have puzzled us since the beginning of medicine is now beginning to open. And while the full promise of biomedical research remains many years away from being realized, there is that opportunity, that hope, that we can find a cure for cancer, diabetes, heart disease, Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injuries, and many other illnesses. Mr. Speaker, I oppose H.R. 2505 because it would stifle important research and decrease the potential for new life-saving medical treatments. The Greenwood substitute strikes a careful balance between banning the immoral and unsafe practice of reproductive human cloning, while at the same time promoting important biomedical research.

I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 2505 and support the Greenwood substitute.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today's debate has much less to do with "cloning" human beings and everything about denying legitimate and important stem cell research. I am concerned that we are getting ahead of ourselves. The issue of stem cell research and its various clinical applications is incredibly complex and the technology very new. There is also the concern that other political issues, such as abortion, are really driving this debate. Until we can tame the rhetoric and focus on the underlying issues, we should not limit legitimate scientific research.

I will vote for the Greenwood/Deutsch amendment because it was better than the underlying bill, not because it represents a good long-term policy.

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2505 offered by Mr. WELDON and in support of the alternative bill offered by Mr. GREENWOOD. We must not ban vital research and treatment for millions of suffering people. H.R. 2505 will severely limit the advancement of medical discovery and vital research.

There are strong feelings on both sides of this argument. Understandably, those on the other side are driven by what they describe as the degradation of human life that cloning proposes. I do not think that there is a member in this House who does not shudder at the sheer awesome scope of this research. On the one hand, we fear a world where human beings are created in a lab for the sole purpose of harvesting their organs, characteristics and other items for the benefit of other human beings. On the other hand, we fear foregoing a cure for many of the horrible afflictions that face man like diabetes, cancer, spinal cord injuries and Parkinson's Disease.

I do know that God has blessed us with the knowledge and the skill to do more than just ponder a cure for these afflictions. My concern is that with such a ban in place, as envisioned in this bill, there will be no opportunity to learn all that God might have us learn. All because we acted too quickly to ban research before there was a chance to truly ponder the ways to manage and control this research. For example, if the above research at some point allows us to create an embryo, a cell, a stem cell or any other viable alternative genetic material without the use of human genetic mate-

rial will this provision prevent its use? Is that human cloning or creating life?

I truly believe that prior to an outright ban of this research, Congress needs to make further efforts to educate every Member of this body. The knowledge that has been provided to us through this research is tremendous. We should do everything we can to understand it and manage its use. We should not, however, ban its use without careful circumspection.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today we're being asked to choose between two options dealing with the controversies surrounding cloning and stem cell research.

As an obstetrician gynecologist with 30 years of experience with strong pro-life convictions I find this debate regarding stem cell research and human cloning off-track, dangerous, and missing some very important points.

This debate is one of the most profound ethical issues of all times. It has moral, religious, legal, and ethical overtones.

However, this debate is as much about process as it is the problem we are trying to solve.

This dilemma demonstrates so clearly why difficult problems like this are made much more complex when we accept the notion that a powerful centralized state should provide the solution, while assuming it can be done precisely and without offending either side, which is a virtual impossibility.

Centralized governments' solutions inevitably compound the problem we're trying to solve. The solution is always found to be offensive to those on the losing side of the debate. It requires that the loser contribute through tax payments to implement the particular program and ignores the unintended consequences that arise. Mistakes are nationalized when we depend on Presidential orders or a new federal law. The assumption that either one is capable of quickly resolving complex issues is unfounded. We are now obsessed with finding a quick fix for this difficult problem.

Since federal funding has already been used to promote much of the research that has inspired cloning technology, no one can be sure that voluntary funds would have been spent in the same manner.

There are many shortcomings of cloning and I predict there are more to come. Private funds may well have flowed much more slowly into this research than when the government/taxpayer does the funding.

The notion that one person, i.e., the President, by issuing a Presidential order can instantly stop or start major research is frightening. Likewise, the U.S. Congress is no more likely to do the right thing than the President by rushing to pass a new federal law.

Political wisdom in dealing with highly charged and emotional issues is not likely to be found.

The idea that the taxpayer must fund controversial decisions, whether it be stem cell research, or performing abortion overseas, I find repugnant.

The original concept of the republic was much more suited to sort out the pros and

cons of such a difficult issue. It did so with the issue of capital punishment. It did so, until 1973, with the issue of abortion. As with many other issues it has done the same but now unfortunately, most difficult problems are nationalized.

Decentralized decision making and privatized funding would have gone a long way in preventing the highly charged emotional debate going on today regarding cloning and stem cell research.

There is danger in a blanket national prohibition of some questionable research in an effort to protect what is perceived as legitimate research. Too often there are unintended consequences. National legalization of cloning and financing discredits life and insults those who are forced to pay.

Even a national law prohibiting cloning legitimizes a national approach that can later be used to undermine this original intent. This national approach rules out states from passing any meaningful legislation and regulation on these issues.

There are some medical questions not yet resolved and careless legislation may impede legitimate research and use of fetal tissue. For instance, should a spontaneously aborted fetus, non-viable, not be used for stem cell research or organ transplant? Should a live fetus from an ectopic pregnancy removed and generally discarded not be used in research? How is a spontaneous abortion of an embryo or fetus different from an embryo conceived in a dish?

Being pro-life and pro-research makes the question profound and I might say best not answered by political demagogues, executive orders or emotional hype.

How do problems like this get resolved in a free society where government power is strictly limited and kept local? Not easily, and not perfectly, but I am confident it would be much better than through centralized and arbitrary authority initiated by politicians responding to emotional arguments.

For a free society to function, the moral standards of the people are crucial. Personal morality, local laws, and medical ethics should prevail in dealing with a subject such as this. This law, the government, the bureaucrats, the politicians can't make the people more moral in making these judgments.

Laws inevitably reflect the morality or immorality of the people. The Supreme Court did not usher in the 60s revolution that undermined the respect for all human life and liberty. Instead, the people's attitude of the 60s led to the Supreme Court Roe vs. Wade ruling in 1973 and contributed to a steady erosion of personal liberty.

If a centralized government is incapable of doing the right thing, what happens when the people embrace immorality and offer no voluntary ethical approach to difficult questions such as cloning?

The government then takes over and predictably makes things much worse. The government cannot instill morality in the people. An apathetic and immoral society inspires